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American Fern Journal

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FOREWORD

About six months ago, a vote was taken to determine whether the American Fern Society was in favor of owning and publishing its official journal. The poll showed sixty in favor, ten opposed, and ten recorded as indifferent, clearly a strong sentiment in favor of a new journal.

As to the advisability of starting a new journal, there are at least two reasons for such action, from which few members can dissent. First, the probability that the present official organ may be discontinued when it has reached its twentieth volume, or even sooner, as its editor has stated more than once. If such a proceeding is imminent, it is none too soon for the Society to take action, looking toward the starting of a new journal. Secondly, it would be obviously to the advantage of the Society to control and publish its official organ, if it can do so creditably. But (without regard to these considerations,) since the Society requires a journal for its operation, and if it has the means and ability to publish for itself, why should we continue to be dependent upon a yearly contract with a privately owned journal, which contract is liable at the beginning of each year to fail of renewal? Especially when we add that the editorial pages of this privately owned journal are partly devoted to maintaining the editor's views in a controversy upon which the members of the Society are divided, or indifferent, and upon which, therefore, it is policy for the Society to remain neutral.

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The undersigned believe that a large proportion of the American Fern Society are in favor of Society ownership, and that such ownership is entirely feasible.

In order to test the matter, to secure reliable data for estimating expenses, and to find out by actual experience what difficulties are to be met and what support can be relied upon, this number has been issued, the expense being shared by a few members who thus act as a voluntary committee of inquiry. If it meets with the approval and support of the members generally, it will be continued as long as support is forthcoming. Already a second issue is practically assured, and copy is plentiful.

Although the action is entirely unofficial, it is intended to make the Journal about what it would be if it were the official publication, publishing news, notes and other matter of interest to the Society, and, as seems proper for a Society paper, personalities will be tabooed, and the editorial department will take a neutral position as to any intra-society controversy. In the matter of nomenclature, each contributor may exercise his preference.

If at any time the Executive Council decides to take it up, the Journal will be turned over to the Society without any expense. In the meantime we ask your support: by contributions in any amount possible; by subscriptions for this number and the next; by suggestions.¹ A full statement of the expenses of this issue, showing what the Society could expect if it owned its journal, will be published in the next number.

(Signed) L. S. HOPKINS
H. E. RANSIER
E. J. WINSLOW
R. C. BENEDICT
PHILIP DOWELL
W. C. BARBOUR
NELLIE MIRICK

¹ Suggestions, subscriptions, and contributions may be sent to Mr. E. J. Winslow, Lasell Seminary, Auburndale, Mass.